

Contributions.

COMMUNION WITH GOD.

J. M. BOWMAN.

"Be content with such things as you have; for he hath said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' So that we may boldly say 'The Lord is my helper,' and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Heb. 13:5, 6.

This Scripture has come to me with peculiar helpfulness and blessing this morning. The first quotation is used by the Holy Spirit as the rich seed bed from which firm abiding faith springs and bears its rich fruit of trust and restful dependence upon the unseen God. The second leads to the taking of the blessing for ones own. It calmly leads the trusting child of God to sweetly and boldly breathe in its peace and restfulness.

The first is thought to be the word of God, so often found in the Old Testament, which God gives as reason for man's intelligent acceptance of, and trusting in, his promises. To the question in Jacob's mind as to how the promise of God to him can really be realized comes the answer, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Gen. 28:15.

It is so to Moses when in fearful perplexity he wonders, while the tabernacle must be outside the camp because of the stiffneckedness of the people, "how can I lead these people up to, and then into, the good land promised to their fathers." "My presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest." Ex. 33:14.

It was that that led Joshua to firmly go forward to drive out the hosts of the enemy, led by fearful giants. "I will be with thee . . . I will not fail thee."

In this too is the glad some answer to the perplexed, troubling, worried soul, who to-day says, "O how can I be faithful to God's word and realize the promises of rest and peace and joy unspeakable, when the cares and demands and necessities and pleasures of life tower, tower up so fearfully in the way." "If I should obey the word of God surely my business would go to the wall," or "I would not have the time to be up on all the latest scientific, economical and religious theories of the day." Or "What in the world will they think and say about it?" "Turn not from it" (the will of God) "to the right hand nor to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest." Josh. 1:7.

We may boldly say "the Lord is my helper." O how the worry and wear and failure of life is lost when one boldly

claims and appropriates for himself this assuring word of God, and really realizes that strength and help comes from God to his obedient trusting children! How one can realize perfect safety in God when he rests fully upon his word for guidance! God our Father, is so tenderly good to take all of our cares and needs and make them his own. He will do it. He wants to do it. He is our helper. We may say it boldly. Our helper in every need. In doing his will in every particular, no difference how it may conflict with man's ways. We can say it boldly.

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THE LIFE IMMORTAL.

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"Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the North wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death."

When the golden bowl is broken and the silver cord is loosed, with tears we lay our loved ones away. The silent grave—how deep and full of mystery! How we shrink from the dampness, darkness, dripping water, and decay! I shall die and be forgotten and the world go on just the same as if I had never been,—and yet, how I have loved! How I have longed! How I have aspired! The little book of life is so often the same old story bound over anew. Only once in a while a stately poem is found in one, or another's leaves are illumined with the glories of noble deeds.

There is an electrical experiment which consists in passing a flash through letters of gold-leaf in a darkened room, whereupon some name or legend springs out of the darkness in characters of fire. So there are songs all written out in our souls, which could be read if the flash might pass through them, but the fire must come from God's own hand. When this mortal robe is dissolved and we are clothed in immortality, songs unsung and thoughts unuttered will be revealed.

The idea of a future life dwelt in the breasts of our first parents. Every succeeding generation since has dreamed of a happy world beyond the pains and trials of mortal dissolution. Our engines are built for a longer voyage than that between the ports of life and death. Wafted to us from the shore of bloom come to our spirits whispers of undying hope, which tell us that we shall have immortal life.

The three inscriptions over the three doors of the Cathedral of Milan read, "All that which pleases us is but for a moment," "All that which troubles us is

but for a moment." That only is important which is eternal." The world is like a river, every wave a human soul fix rushing on toward eternity. And if that only is important which is eternal, first, prepare to meet thy God.

The eternal world is unseen. There is a veil impenetrable before its mysteries, hiding them from the keenest eye. Human eyes cannot discover nor human understanding find out the will and purposes of God. But it pleased God through infinite love to bring life and immortality to light through the Gospel.

The beautiful flowers that gladden us in the Spring-time wither and die when the winter snows blow over them. The balmy days return again and the cold, dark earth unlocks her bosom. Myriads of graves are opening, life is bursting forth everywhere, and beauty is springing out of desolation. Then those same dead flowers answer Nature's call, and they bloom again in unrivaled splendor. The head grows white, the voice trembles, the limbs are bent with age,—and all too soon there is a silence and a pall and a tear, and a dear one is laid to rest. But at God's summons life immortal awaits him and he lives again. The Ocean of Time has beaten the frail shell against the shore and it is broken. It lies here, but the pearl, the all, the soul is in Eternity. Yet the soul

"Lives and loves you; lost 'tis true,
By such light as shines for you;
But in the light ye cannot see
Of unfulfilled felicity,
In enlarging paradise,
Lives a life that never dies."

A COMPARISON.

W. A. WELTY.

Suppose we were in a neighborhood where the people could be seen congregating as one common brotherhood for the purpose of studying a system that is in direct opposition to Christ and the principles he advocates. We see them cease their labor one day in the week, and make their way to the place of worship. Upon entering the assembly we see the people humbly bowing their knees to some "natural philosopher," or perhaps the speaker is just reading. They are all listening attentively. He proceeds—"Thomas Paine is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside the still waters, he restoreth my soul." There is a deep silence pervades the audience. The song is announced and they mingle their voices—"Darwin lover of my soul, let me to thy bosom fly." Then we listen to a song by the